Pam.
China
Int. rel.

A Challenge to Imperialism

Manifesto of the
Chinese Students' Alliance
in the United States of America

Syracuse, New York
and
Lafayette, Indiana
September 12, 1925

A Challenge to Imperialism

Manifesto of the Chinese Students' Alliance
in the United States of America.

In the course of human events, when a nation is on the verge of achieving her salvation by breaking off the slavish yoke of imperialism, that nation owes the world an explanation. For this reason, we, Chinese students studying in the United States of America, in annual convention assembled, sharing the same views with our fellow citizens at home, do hereby resolve to issue the following declaration:

Although it may seem that resentment for the accumulated injuries to our country and a burning ardour for her glory may deprive us of the detachment which the infinite importance of the occasion demands, yet years of sufferance, combined with an earnest desire for truth, have made us stranger to all passions—except a passion for the good of humanity. No one estimates liberty and justice more highly than those who do not possess them. It is in a very calm and sober spirit that we appeal to the justice of the human world for the rectification of our wrongs.

The history of international relations of the past century is a history of the conflict between imperialism and nationalism, the oppressor and the oppressed. In the midst of this great human struggle, China is by no means an exception. For the last eighty years, we have come under the domination of imperialistic designs. We have been thrust into the rank of enslaved races. We do not hesitate to admit that our country is no longer a free and independent state. We so admit because we have long been laboring under these grievous burdens and because we are firmly determined to labor under them no more:

Our territorial integrity has been mutilated by the great Powers positively through cessions, concessions, leaseholds and settlements and negatively through diverse spheres of influence;

Our right of self-defense has been denied through the inhibition of fortifying our strategic points by the great Powers and through the stationing of foreign garrisons in our ports and foreign naval vessels on our inland waters;

Our administrative entity has been impaired by the forced appointment of foreign advisers by the great Powers, by exterritorial jurisdiction, and postal and wireless communications;

Our economic freedom has been restricted by the conventional tariff, by the control of our tariff administration, salt gabelle and other branches of our financial administration;

Our economic freedom is further hampered by invidious provisions of the other innumerable economic concessions.

Consequently we have been suffering under foreign economic exploitation, we have been treated as beasts of burden and we have been denied even the mere right of existence. For the last eitghy years, we have been governed virtually by the foreign imperialists—by their intemperance, their ignorance, their brutality. In a word, we have been deprived of every right of liberty, equality and independence.

In order that we may freely develop our national life, we do hereby solemnly declare:

That the Powers must restore to us our lawful territory including the ceded territories of Hongkong, Maritime Province, Amur Province, Macao and Formosa, the leaseholds of Port Arthur and Dairen, Wei-hai-wei, Kwang-chow-wan and Kowloon and all consessions and settlements;

That the Powers must renounce all claims to the so-called spheres of influence;

That the Powers must withdraw all their police and troops from our territory and their naval vessels from our inland waters;

That the Powers must remove the restrictions upon our right of self-defense with regard to Teintsin, Taku, the route between Peking and the sea and the neutralized territory north of the Kwantung Province;

That the Powers must waive all the special privileges which international law does not sanction but are now enjoyed by the Legation Quarters at Peking;

That the Powers must give up their extraterritorial rights;

That the Powers must abolish the present conventional tariff and restore to us our tariff autonomy;

That the Powers must forfeit their claims to special administrative advantages regarding the customs administration, the salt gabelle, and the postal and wireless administrations; and

That the Powers must revise the present treaties with regard to Tibet and Outer Mongolia.

This is a declaration of our rights. China knows no salvation until these are met. Our people tried, first at Versailles and later at Washington, to secure the readjustment of our relations through the hands of the diplomats. But our supplication only produced increased violence. Our people did not understand that, after a century of servitude, a nation can only be regenerated either through virtue or through death.

For us, believers of the creed of nationalism, the lesson is plain. We know what is wanting to the four hundred millions of people, desirous of emancipating themselves, is not power but faith. We, the young, have faith in our nation, united for a common purpose. The rising of China, for the cause of liberty, in the name of independence, is invincible. With such a power and such a faith as ours, we might easily make the French Revolution insignificant and the Russian Revolution a mere trifle. Let the imperialist tremble at the thought of a Chinese Revolution. The world did little note how we have suffered for the last eighty years, but they shall never forget what we are going to achieve in the near future.

September 12, 1925.

Syracuse, New York and
Lafayette, Indiana.